

**What Is Claimed Is:**

1. A method of streaming media to multiple clients, comprising:  
receiving a request to stream media from a media track to a first client;  
5 extracting a set of metadata from the media track, wherein said metadata facilitates identification and retrieval of the media from the media track;  
storing said extracted set of metadata in a memory;  
streaming the media to the first client in a first stream while referring to said stored metadata; and  
10 streaming the media to a second client in a second stream while referring to said stored metadata.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
maintaining a first file descriptor for retrieving the media from the media  
15 track for said first stream; and  
maintaining a second file descriptor for retrieving the media from the media track for said second stream.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the media track is a track of a live  
20 media event.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the media track is a track of a pre-recorded media program.
5. A method of using a single set of media metadata to facilitate  
25 streaming the media to multiple clients, comprising:  
receiving a request to stream media from a first media track to a first

client, wherein the first media track also includes metadata corresponding to the media;

invoking a track module configured to maintain one copy of said metadata in a memory;

5       operating a first track handler to stream the media to the first client, wherein said first track handler accesses said metadata to facilitate said streaming;

receiving a request to stream the media to a second client before said streaming of the media to the first client is terminated; and

operating a second track handler to stream the media to the second client, wherein said second track handler accesses said metadata to facilitate said streaming;

wherein said metadata is configured to facilitate retrieval of the media from the first media track.

15       6.       The method of claim 5, wherein said operating a first track handler comprises using a first file descriptor to retrieve the media from the first file track; and

said operating a second track handler comprises using a second file descriptor to retrieve the media from the first file track.

20       7.       The method of claim 5, wherein said operating a first track handler comprises:

establishing a first set of references to said metadata;

using said first set of references to identify a first portion of the media to be streamed to the first client for a first time index; and

25       using said first set of references to locate said first media portion in the first media track.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein said operating a second track handler comprises:

- establishing a second set of references to said metadata;
- 5 using said second set of references to identify a second media portion to be streamed to the second client for a second time index; and
- using said second set of references to locate said second media portion in the first media track.

10 9. The method of claim 8, wherein said first set of references and said second set of references are used to access said metadata simultaneously.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:  
removing said metadata from the memory after said first stream and said  
15 second stream are terminated.

11. A computer readable storage medium storing instructions that, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a method of streaming media to multiple clients, the method comprising:  
20 receiving a request to stream media from a media track to a first client;  
extracting a set of metadata from the media track, wherein said metadata facilitates identification and retrieval of the media from the media track;  
storing said extracted set of metadata in a memory;  
streaming the media to the first client in a first stream while referring to  
25 said stored metadata; and  
streaming the media to a second client in a second stream while referring to said stored metadata.

12. A computer readable storage medium containing a data structure configured for facilitating the simultaneous streaming of media from a media track to multiple clients, the data structure comprising:

5 a set of metadata configured to associate time indices of the media track with corresponding portions of the media, and to locate said corresponding portions within the media track;

wherein said set of metadata is simultaneously accessed by each of multiple client stream handlers, wherein each stream handler is associated with a different  
10 client, to facilitate retrieval of different portions of the media for streaming to their respective clients.

13. An apparatus for streaming media to clients, comprising:  
a first track of a media program stored on a first storage device, the first  
15 media track comprising:  
media; and  
metadata configured to facilitate access to the media;  
a first memory;  
a set of track handle modules, wherein each of said track handle modules  
20 is configured to facilitate streaming the media to a different client; and  
a track module configured to store said metadata in said first memory for shared access by said track handle modules;  
wherein said track handle modules access said metadata to identify  
portions of the media and locate said portions on the first storage device.

25

14. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein each of said track handle modules is allocated a separate file descriptor for retrieving the media from the

first storage device.

15. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein each of said track handle modules simultaneously accesses said metadata in said first memory.

5

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein said simultaneous accesses to said metadata are configured to identify different portions of the media.

10 17. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein said media portions are associated with time indices within said first media track and said metadata is configured to identify, for a given time index, said associated media portion.

15 18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein said metadata is further configured to identify, for a given media portion, a location on said first storage device at which said given media portion is stored.